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December 20, 1977
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Mr. Mike D. Antonovich
Assemblyman, Forty-First District
512 East Wilson Avenue
Suite 210
Glendale, California

Dear Mr. Antonovich:

The President and Vice President have asked me to reply to your letters of December 2 in which you expressed your concern over the plight of the Vietnamese refugees fleeing by small boat.

As Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs I am equally concerned about these unfortunate people. We have been instrumental in gaining approval for the admission of 15,000 new Indochinese refugees of whom 7,000 will be Vietnamese "boat cases". Several thousand have already been resettled with the assistance of their sponsors in the United States. The plight of the additional thousands of unexpected refugees fleeing by boat has been very much in the forefront of our work and we intend to hold consultations with the Congress early in 1978 in an effort to provide additional refugee opportunities for the future. While it is too early now to predict the outcome of these discussions, we hope the voices of concerned Americans such as yourself will be heard.

We feel that the nations of Southeast Asia will continue to accept these refugees on a temporary basis as long as they know the United States and other states will offer eventual resettlement opportunities. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is very

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much involved in this program in nations of first asylum and is supervising the operation of 15 camps in Thailand housing over 90,000 refugees.

We appreciate your concern, and I know you share our hopes that the Congress will approve additional spaces for refugee entry to the United States in the New Year.

Sincerely,

Patricia M. Derian
Assistant Secretary for
Human Rights and
Humanitarian Affairs

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